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DISTRICT OF MARYLAND
BY _____ Deputy

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND

IN THE MATTER OF THE SEARCH OF:

2614 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE,
APARTMENT 304, BALTIMORE,
MARYLAND (“TARGET RESIDENCE 1”)

645 SOUTH WICKHAM ROAD,
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND (“TARGET
RESIDENCE 2”)

THE PERSON OF ALMA WILLIAMS

THE PERSON OF PHILLIP SIMMS

Case No. 1:23-mj-02648-ABA-1:23-mj-02651-ABA

UNDER SEAL

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF
APPLICATIONS FOR SEARCH WARRANTS**

I, Special Agent Grace Meyer, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

PURPOSE OF THE AFFIDAVIT

1. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 41, I submit this affidavit in support of applications for warrants authorizing the search of the following locations:

a. the premises located at 2614 Pennsylvania Avenue, Apartment 304, Baltimore, Maryland (“TARGET RESIDENCE 1”), described in **Attachment A-1**;

b. the premises located at 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland (“TARGET RESIDENCE 2”), described in **Attachment A-2**.

c. the person of Alma **WILLIAMS**, including any cellular phone, electronics, or other electronic storage device of their person, as described in **Attachment A-3**.

d. the person of Phillip **SIMMS**, including any cellular phone, electronics, or other electronic storage device of their person, as described in **Attachment A-4**.

TARGET RESIDENCE 1 and **TARGET RESIDENCE 2** are hereinafter referred to collectively as the “**TARGET RESIDENCES**,” and **WILLIAMS** and **SIMMS** are hereinafter referred to collectively as the “**TARGET SUBJECTS**.”

2. As described further in this affidavit, I submit probable cause exists to believe that the **TARGET RESIDENCES** and the **TARGET SUBJECTS** contain evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of the following violations: Theft Within the Special Maritime and Territorial Jurisdiction of the United States (18 U.S.C. § 661) and Transportation of Stolen Goods (18 U.S.C. § 2314) (the “**TARGET OFFENSES**”). The property to be searched for and seized from the **TARGET RESIDENCES** and **TARGET SUBJECTS** is described in **Attachment B**.

3. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause for search warrants, I have not included every detail of every aspect of the investigation. Rather, I have set forth only those facts that I believe are necessary to establish probable cause to believe that evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of the **TARGET OFFENSES** are located within the **TARGET RESIDENCES** and on or about the persons of the **TARGET SUBJECTS**. I have not, however, excluded any information known to me that I believe would defeat a determination of probable cause. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents, participating agencies, witnesses, and reports.

AGENT BACKGROUND

4. I am a Special Agent of the FBI and have been so employed since February 2023. As such, I am an officer of the United States who is empowered by law to conduct investigations of and to make arrests for offenses enumerated in Titles 18 and 21 of the United States Code. I am currently assigned to the FBI Violent Crimes Task Force in Baltimore, Maryland. I have duties

that include investigations of bank and armored carrier robberies, armed commercial robberies, carjackings, and crimes committed on the high seas, to include crimes committed on cruise ships.

5. I have participated in the execution of search warrants in various types of investigations involving searches of residences, mobile phones, computers, computer equipment, electronically stored information, email accounts, and social media accounts. I have also received training and gained experience in the areas of computer crime investigations, the identification and collection of computer and cellular-telephone-related evidence, and the investigation of federal offenses committed in the special maritime jurisdiction of the United States, which includes crimes on the high seas.

PROBABLE CAUSE

6. On October 5, 2023, a Security Services representative from Carnival Cruise Line (CCL) contacted FBI Baltimore regarding the theft of two art sculptures, together valued at approximately \$12,800. The theft occurred during a cruise which departed from the Port of Baltimore, located in Baltimore, Maryland, on September 24, 2023, and returned to the Port of Baltimore on September 30, 2023.

7. On October 1, 2023, an art auctioneer employed on the Carnival Legend discovered two art sculptures from the ship's art gallery were missing. The art gallery is located on the third deck of the ship near a piano bar, just outside a dining venue. The first missing art sculpture was a lucite sculpture by American artist Robert Wyland titled "Kiss the Sea," depicting two sea turtles.¹ The retail price of this sculpture is \$6,200. The second missing art sculpture was a lucite sculpture by American artist Marcus Glenn, depicting a man playing a piano with a heart in the background.

¹ Lucite is a heavy acrylic or plastic resin, used to make airplane windows, camera lenses, and automobile taillights.

The retail price of this sculpture is \$6,600. Both sculptures were last seen by Carnival Legend staff during the evening of September 28, 2023, and are pictured below.



“Kiss the Sea” Sculpture



“Tappin the Keys for the Love” Sculpture

8. Upon notification of the missing sculptures, Carnival Legend security personnel reviewed closed-circuit television (CCTV) footage. This footage, which I have also reviewed still images of, revealed on September 29, 2023, at approximately 2:04 am, a black female subject and a black male subject entered the art gallery through an open doorway. Both subjects appeared emptyhanded as they entered the art gallery. Several minutes later, the same subjects exited the art gallery carrying transparent objects consistent in appearance with the missing sculptures in their hands. The subjects then entered an elevator on the third deck and exited the elevator on the seventh deck still carrying the transparent objects in their hands.

9. Ship position records for the Carnival Legend revealed the ship was in international waters at the time the female subject and male subject removed the items from the ship's art gallery. To date, neither sculpture has been located on the ship.

10. Carnival Legend security personnel identified the female subject and male subject observed in the CCTV footage as Alma **WILLIAMS** and Phillip **SIMMS**, using information contained in CCL's SeaEntry passenger identification system. Records provided by CCL revealed the **TARGET SUBJECTS** shared the same cruise reservation, which was made in **WILLIAMS'** name, and were assigned the same cabin located on the seventh deck of the ship for the duration of the cruise. CCL records contained dates of birth and telephone numbers for each of the **TARGET SUBJECTS**, and listed the address for both passengers as 2614 Pennsylvania Avenue, Apartment 304, Baltimore, Maryland 21217. These records also indicated that the **TARGET SUBJECTS** initially boarded the Carnival Legend in Baltimore, Maryland, on September 24, 2023 at approximately 4:20 pm, and disembarked the Carnival Legend in Baltimore, Maryland, on September 30, 2023 at approximately 9:50 am.

11. On October 11, 2023, a Facebook profile with the display name "Phillip Simms" was identified. In a video posted to this Facebook profile on October 11, 2023, a black male, consistent in appearance with the photo of **SIMMS** taken by CCL when **SIMMS** initially boarded the Carnival Legend, can be seen wearing a dark-colored vest, white dress shirt, and striped tie while playing a red piano. In a photo posted to the same Facebook profile on September 30, 2023, a black male, consistent in appearance with the photo of **SIMMS** taken by CCL when **SIMMS** initially boarded the Carnival Legend, is pictured wearing what appears to be the same white dress shirt, dark-colored vest, and striped tie from the video. The caption of the photo is "On my way home, thanks Bermuda I had a great time." CCL records revealed the cruise on which the

TARGET SUBJECTS were passengers traveled from Baltimore to Bermuda. The CCTV footage of the female subject and male subject carrying the transparent objects revealed the male subject was wearing a white dress shirt, dark-colored vest, and striped tie consistent in appearance with the clothing worn by the black male in the video and photo posted to the Phillip Simms Facebook account.

12. A query of Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) records for **WILLIAMS** revealed she currently resides at 2614 Pennsylvania Avenue, Apartment 304, Baltimore, Maryland. MVA records also indicated **WILLIAMS** has one vehicle currently registered to her: a white 2015 Kia Soul bearing Maryland license plate 2EY4666. No additional owners of this vehicle were listed in MVA records.

13. On October 6, 2023, at approximately 7:15 am, a spot check was conducted in the vicinity of 2614 Pennsylvania Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, which is an apartment building. A white 2015 Kia Soul bearing Maryland license plate 2EY4666 was parked in the parking lot of the apartment building.

14. On October 8, 2023, at approximately 10:30 am, another spot check was conducted in the vicinity of 2614 Pennsylvania Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland. The white 2015 Kia Soul bearing Maryland license plate 2EY4666 was parked in the same parking lot of the apartment building.

15. A query of license plate reader records revealed **WILLIAMS'** registered vehicle was captured by a license plate reader system in the vicinity of 2614 Pennsylvania Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, as recently as September 14, 2023, at 10:56 pm. **WILLIAMS'** registered vehicle was also captured by a license plate reader system in the vicinity of 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland, on September 12, 2023, September 23, 2023, and October 1, 2023.

16. A query of MVA records for **SIMMS** revealed **SIMMS** currently resides at 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland. MVA records also indicated **SIMMS** has the following two vehicles currently registered to him: a white 2005 Nissan Armada bearing Maryland license plate 1EE1924 and a grey 2006 Chrysler 300 bearing Maryland license plate 1DG1728. No additional owners of these vehicles were listed in MVA records.

17. A query of law enforcement reporting for **SIMMS** revealed multiple police reports involving **SIMMS** from January 2016 through June 2023. In each of the police reports, **SIMMS**' address was listed as 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland. For example, on January 7, 2016, **SIMMS** reported to the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) that his vehicle was damaged while it was parked in front of his residence located at 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland. BPD responded to **SIMMS**' residence, but a suspect was not located. On June 8, 2021, BPD served **SIMMS** with a protective order at his residence located at 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland.

18. A query of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation records revealed **SIMMS** purchased the residence located at 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland on April 26, 2023. **SIMMS** purchased this residence from his former wife. **SIMMS**' former wife owned the home since September 4, 2014.

19. On October 6, 2023, at approximately 7:35 am, a spot check was conducted in the vicinity of 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland. A white 2005 Nissan Armada bearing Maryland license plate 1EY1924 and a grey 2006 Chrysler 300 bearing Maryland license plate 1DG1728 were parked on the road in front of the residence.

20. On October 8, 2023, at approximately 11:00 am, another spot check was conducted in the vicinity of 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland. Both the 2005 white Nissan

Armada bearing Maryland license plate 1EY1924 and the 2006 grey Chrysler 300 bearing Maryland license plate 1DG1728 were parked on the road in front of the residence.

21. A query of license plate reader records for **SIMMS'** registered vehicles revealed both vehicles have been captured by a license plate reader system in the vicinity of 645 South Wickham Road, Baltimore, Maryland on four occasions from September 4, 2023 through September 23, 2023 between the hours of 2:42 am and 4:42 am.

AGENT TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

22. Through my training and experience, I have become familiar with the methods and techniques used by criminals to commit theft and transportation of stolen property, and how those criminals conceal and store information related to such criminal activity in their cellular phones, computers, tablets, and other computer hardware. Furthermore, based on my knowledge, training, and experience, it is common for suspects who commit theft and transportation of stolen property to use social media or email accounts to communicate about their crimes. I know that information from these accounts is often contained within cellular phones, computers, tablets, and other computer hardware.

23. Based on my knowledge, training, and experience, I am aware that fruits and instrumentalities of criminal activity are often concealed in digital form. Furthermore, digital technology is often used to store evidence of criminal activity. Individuals who participate in collective criminal activity, including theft and transportation of stolen property, frequently utilize electronic devices, such as cellular phones, computers, tablets, and other computer hardware, to commit their crimes. Individuals who participate in collective criminal activity frequently have cellular phones with them when they commit their crimes and frequently communicate with one another by cellular phone and by social media and use of the Internet before and after those crimes.

I know that individuals will use cellular phones and communication applications to identify the items they plan to steal and transport, and to communicate with co-conspirators or other parties about their criminal activity.

24. Based on my training and experience, I know that instant messages, emails, voicemails, photos, and videos—all of which may be saved on a user's physical devices such as cellular phones, computers, tablets, and other computer hardware—are often created and used in furtherance of collective criminal activities, including theft and transportation of stolen property. I also know individuals tend to take photographic images of the property or items taken in connection with the crimes committed, to share that information with others, or to store it on electronic devices. More specifically, I know that members of collective criminal activity use cellular telephones to further their objectives by, among other things, communicating with other co-conspirators by talking and by text messages, including iMessages; and taking photographs and recording videos of co-conspirators and contraband.

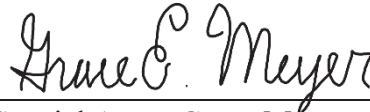
25. Based on my training and experience, I know that it is common for offenders to store records of their criminal activity in within their residences, to include secure locations within residences such as combination or key-lock safes or strong boxes, suitcases, locked cabinets, and other types of locked or closed containers, and hidden compartments, not for only ready access, but also to conceal them from law enforcement. Furthermore, based on my training and experience, I know that in residences or other secure locations, offenders typically maintain identification and indicia of occupancy, residency, and/or ownership of the premises.

AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

26. Based on the foregoing, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause to believe that evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of the **TARGET OFFENSES** will be found

in the **TARGET RESIDENCES** and on or about the person of the **TARGET SUBJECTS**. I request that the Court issued the proposed Search Warrants for the **TARGET RESIDENCES** identified in Attachments A-1 through A-4.

Respectfully submitted,



Special Agent Grace Meyer
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Affidavit submitted by email and attested to me as true and accurate by telephone consistent with Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 and 41(d)(3) this 16th day of October 2023.



The Honorable Adam B. Abelson
United States Magistrate Judge